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Thirty-eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 18 June 1991, at 10 a.m.

President:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON	(Uruguay)
later:	Mr. JASINSKI (Vice-President)	(Poland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL IN 1992 (DP/1991/58)

1. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Council), introducing document DP/1991/58 on the biennialization or triennialization of subjects on the agenda of the Governing Council, reviewed the relevant decisions on the working methods of the Governing Council described in paragraphs 1 to 5 of the document. One reason underlying the Administrator's earlier proposals on the rationalization of the work of the Council (DP/1991/3) had been the desire to reduce the total volume of documentation requested by the Council. Although that had not proved possible to the desired extent at the current session, owing to the unforeseen need for additional documentation, the volume had been reduced considerably, and further reductions were expected in the future.

2. It was most regrettable that some documentation had been distributed late. Arrangements for translation and reproduction on a contractual or overtime basis had been made, and would also be needed in 1992, particularly if the Council decided to hold its session earlier than June to avoid overlapping with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The innovative advance distribution of unedited documents in the original language had been continued, which meant that they had been delivered to the missions of Council members 48 hours after the final drafts had been cleared by UNDP, a practice unique in the United Nations system.

3. The report before the Council reviewed previous decisions on the biennialization or triennialization of specific subjects (paras. 6-9). At the current session, the Drafting Group was conducting its work on the understanding that any requests for reports for consideration and possible action included in draft decisions would have to be amended if they were not in accordance with decisions the plenary Council might take regarding biennialization or triennialization.

4. He drew specific attention to the proposals by the Administrator in paragraphs 10 and 12 to 17 of document DP/1991/58. A correction should be made in paragraph 17 in the list of subjects under special programmes of assistance: "Role of UNDP in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990" should be listed for consideration in 1992 as a consequence of General Assembly resolution 45/178 A.

5. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) welcomed the progress made in the efforts to streamline the work of the Council. However, he noted that at the current session it unfortunately had been necessary to schedule several meetings simultaneously, a number of points had been raised that might not be entirely relevant to the Council's work but instead represented special interests, and excess time had been spent on some issues, particularly the question of support costs.

(Mr. Soutter, Canada)

6. While his delegation endorsed most of the proposals in document DP/1991/58, it wished to make a number of suggestions. Firstly, the item on the environment should be included in the agenda for February 1992 in order to enhance UNDP's participation in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development scheduled for June 1992. Secondly, consideration of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) could be postponed until 1994. Thirdly, follow-up discussion would be needed on the senior management structure, and if the topic was to be covered in the annual report of the Administrator, that should be made explicit.

7. Fourthly, while his delegation agreed that the item on United Nations system regular and extrabudgetary technical cooperation expenditures should be biennialized, it considered that the customary statistics should continue to be published on a timely, annual basis. Lastly, a number of items on the provisional agenda for the thirty-ninth session presumably would continue to come within the purview of the Standing Committee for Programme Matters, and therefore could be discussed between sessions. More time should be allowed for discussion of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the plenary Council than had been the case at the current session.

8. Document DP/1991/58 had appropriately reminded the Council of the need to define a policy area for the high-level debate in 1992. Human development would be the appropriate choice, for the provocative ideas raised in the two issues of the Human Development Report had received considerable attention from both the public and the development community, but had not yet been addressed in depth within UNDP.

9. The PRESIDENT said that an effort had been made to minimize the number of simultaneous meetings, which had been necessary given the shorter Council session and the very heavy agenda.

10. Mr. CABEIRO QUINTANA (Cuba) reiterated his delegation's objection to the proposal to biennialize high-level debates, and rejected the reason for the proposal advanced in paragraph 4 of document DP/1991/58. Consideration of the budget would in no way interfere with those debates. Quite to the contrary, if the Council held a four-week session, the Budgetary and Finance Committee would have more time to consider the budget. Moreover, senior officials present for the high-level debate would also be available to discuss the budget.

11. The current session had demonstrated that three weeks did not provide sufficient time for proper consideration of the items before the Council. For example, the Budgetary and Finance Committee had not completed its informal consultations, and had only been able to review the audit reports and adopt the corresponding decision. The Council should revert to the four-week session format in 1992.

(Mr. Cabeiro Quintana, Cuba)

12. His delegation proposed that the following items should be considered in 1992: role of UNDP in the 1990s, role of UNDP in combating the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America, evaluation of the mid-term review process, and Standing Committee for Programme Matters. The following items should be taken up in 1993: questions relating to Namibia, funding strategy, sectoral support, and procurement from developing countries. His delegation endorsed the draft provisional agenda for the thirty-ninth session of the Governing Council.

13. Mr. JERLSTROM (Sweden), speaking also on behalf of Denmark, Finland and Norway, noted that the Nordic States had conducted a study on the functioning of the United Nations system and had completed their final report. Nordic embassies throughout the world had been instructed to invite the Governments of their host countries to comment on the report. The Nordic States believed that the report deserved further consideration, and therefore proposed that one theme for the high-level segment of the Council's next session should be the UNDP role in United Nations operational activities.

14. Mr. VAN UFFORD (Netherlands) said that, in general, his delegation agreed with the proposals presented in document DP/1991/58 on the biennialization and triennialization of agenda items. However, the plague of AIDS had grown to such proportions that i was impossible to consider ways of enhancing human development without taking the threat of AIDS into account. The role of UNDP in combating HIV and AIDS was too important to be considered on a biennial basis, and should therefore be on the Governing Council's agenda every year. His delegation also felt that human development issues should be discussed annually.

15. Mr. TWITE (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was committed to the principle of biennialization and triennialization of the Governing Council's work. He was disappointed that many delegations at the current session had treated the agenda item on the annual report of the Administrator as a subject for high-level debate, which ran counter to the spirit of Governing Council decision 91/1.

16. He disagreed with the representative of Cuba on the issue of a four-week session for the Council; three weeks would provide ample opportunity for delegations to raise any issues of concern.

17. In general, he was pleased with the suggestions contained in document DP/1991/58 on how biennialization and triennialization could be properly instituted to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's work. It was important that the Governing Council should set a good example in that regard for the rest of UNDP. He also stressed the importance of discussing the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) in even-numbered years, when the Council met in Geneva. Since the Council was also the governing body for UNV, the dates for consideration of that item should be set well in advance to

(Mr. Twite, United Kingdom)

ensure that the appropriate representatives of the programme would be able to participate.

18. Although his delegation was committed to the principle of biennialization and triennialization, even for important issues such as HIV/AIDS and women in development, it would not stand in the way of annual consideration of those issues if other delegations were strongly in favour of it. He agreed with the representative of Canada that issues related to UNSO and UNCDF could be considered in 1994, and that human development should be a key issue in the 1992 high-level debate. Subject to the observations he had made, he considered the draft agenda for the Council's thirty-ninth session acceptable.

19. Mrs. DUDIK-GAYOSO (United States of America) said that the Council's responsibilities included guiding the formulation of proposals for UNDP programmes and subsequently approving them, overseeing UNDP operations, evaluating its impact, and appropriating funds for its programme and administrative costs. There was unquestionably a need to streamline the Council's working methods, and her delegation relied on the Standing Committee for Programme Matters to help reduce the demands on the Council. Document DP/1991/58 had stimulated a useful debate on ways of rationalizing the Council's consideration of agenda items without decreasing its members' involvement in governing UNDP.

20. With that objective in mind, she proposed a refinement of the concept of biennialization and triennialization, which was not flexible enough, through the classification of agenda items into several categories. Those categories would include: (1) items to be covered in the Administrator's report every year (such as the implementation of UNDP activities at all levels), which would be considered in accordance with decisions taken at the February organizational session; (2) items which required an annual review (such as evaluation results); (3) items which required consideration only three times per cycle, namely at the time of their approval, at the mid-term review and at the time of their evaluation (such as the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America, activities involving non-governmental organizations, and the Management Development Programme); (4) outstanding issues which required annual consideration for the time being, such as national execution and national capacity-building, comparative advantages of UNDP, refugees and displaced persons, and environmental issues; and (5) items which could be biennialized or triennialized, such as women in development, technical cooperation among developing countries, and the trust funds, but which would be dealt with in the Administrator's annual reports in the event of any noteworthy developments. With respect to the issue of HIV/AIDS, she felt that it could be classified in either the first or the third category.

21. Her main concern, however, was that the process should be flexible. She therefore proposed that in the future, in the context of the agenda item on matters relating to the work of the Council, the Governing Council secretariat should provide a table similar to that contained in document DP/1991/58, which

(Mrs. Dudik-Gayoso, United States)

the Council could review and adjust as necessary. She also believed that the UNFPA agenda for 1992 should include an item on similar arrangements for structuring its annual agenda.

22. Her delegation was disappointed in the current session's high-level debate, and felt that its shortcomings could be remedied by improved agenda structuring. At the next session, the Administrator's annual report, which could incorporate the item proposed by the representative of Sweden, should be the subject of the high-level debate. Her delegation did not feel that themes for high-level consideration should be dealt with in separate documents, and planned to submit a draft decision on the matter.

23. She was concerned about the indication that the Council would have 127 country programmes to consider in 1992. The Council should consider no more than five country programmes per day to ensure that they received the attention they deserved. It was therefore important that the Standing Committee for Programme Matters should have substantial time to consider those programmes, and she wondered what arrangements had been made in that regard.

24. Mr. ALMABROUK (Observer for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his delegation had understood that the inclusion in the current session's agenda of the item on UNDP assistance to the Palestinian people was an exception to the biennialization of that item which would not affect the timetable for its consideration at future sessions. He therefore asked why the table in document DP/1991/58 indicated that the item would not be considered at the 1992 session.

25. Mr. JASINSKI (Poland) said that the new arrangement was flexible and that the items to be reviewed in depth every two to three years would not disappear completely from the annual agenda, since they could also be discussed in the context of the Administrator's report or during the high-level segment.

26. In view of the importance of the operational aspects of programmes to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, he felt that the issue should be on the agenda for the 1992 session, at which time the Council could decide how often it should be discussed. He also felt that the Council should discuss the item on steps taken by UNDP in response to action taken by the General Assembly and by other organs of the United Nations system every two or three years, so as to retain a formal link with other United Nations bodies, since many of the issues raised in those bodies could have direct implications for UNDP. In addition, the Council should review biennialization and triennialization from time to time, perhaps in 1993.

27. Mr. SAHLMANN (Germany) said that if the Council could not streamline its agenda, it could not streamline its documents, which unquestionably needed to be more concise. He disagreed with the representative of Cuba on the issue of a four-week session in 1992, especially since 1992 was not a budget year. Although the Standing Committee for Programme Matters would have a very large

(Mr. Sahlmann, Germany)

load of country programmes to consider in 1992, the Council should be able to complete its regular May session in three weeks if the Standing Committee met for one week in February during the organizational session, one week in May during the regular session, and one week in the autumm. He asked how many country programmes were ready for discussion in the current year. Since it did not appear that the Council would complete its consideration of Special Programme Resources, he wondered whether the Standing Committee would hold a session in September 1991.

28. He supported the proposal of the representative of the United States for a more structured approach to biennialization and triennialization, and expressed his willingness to work on a draft decision on the subject. He also agreed that some reports which had previously been received annually could be incorporated into the Administrator's annual report. The Council should take a decision on those issues at its current session, so that a timetable could be drawn up on the basis of the decision before the February 1992 organizational session, at which time the Council could determine possible adjustments to the schedule.

29. He supported the proposal made by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the Nordic States. Discussions on an organizational structure and a funding approach which would benefit the entire United Nations system of operational activities should be included in the 1992 high-level debate. He also supported the representative of Canada in stressing the importance of human development issues.

30. Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) said that he wished to raise the issue of where the Governing Council should hold its meetings. His delegation had previously stated that all UNDP meetings should be convened at its headquarters in New York, so as to promote more active participation by delegations and save financial resources. In 1989, the Governing Council had decided to retain the current arrangement of holding its meetings alternately in New York and Geneva. However, in May 1991 the General Assembly had adopted a resolution on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields to ensure the most efficient and effective use of financial and human resources. Current Governing Council practice wth respect to the venue of the sessions was inconsistent with that principle.

31. He was concerned about the issue because UNDP was the only United Nations organ whose governing body periodically met away from its headquarters; because its current practice resulted in additional expenditure of about $200,000 per year, excluding those for the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development and UNFPA; and because only 16 African countries had missions in Geneva. Thus, the Council could ensure broader participation by developing countries in its meetings if all of its sessions were held in New York. He planned to submit a draft decision on the matter, which six delegations had already agreed to co-sponsor.

32. Mr. SAHLMANN (Germany), speaking on a point of order, said that it would be inappropriate to consider the question of the Council's venue at the current session, since it was not on the agenda.

33. Mr. Jasinski (Poland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

34. Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) said that under the item being discussed, he was entitled to raise any question relating to the Council's work, in accordance with United Nations practice.

35. Mr. SAHLMANN (Germany) said that a debate on the issue of the Council's venue would be lengthy and would not lead to a consensus at the current session. Moreover, the issue had already been discussed in the General Assembly, which had decided to retain the current arrangement. If the Japanese delegation insisted on pursuing the issue, it might be possible to find an accelerated way of dealing with it, possibly through the Bureau. However, the question could not be discussed by the plenary Council at the current session, and he hoped that the Japanese delegation would agree to defer consideration of the question until the next session.

36. The PRESIDENT said that it might be possible for the Bureau to consider the issue and to ask the United Nations Secretariat for information on the financial implications it entailed. The Council's heavy workload would not allow it to give the issue the careful consideration it deserved at the current session, so it might be preferable to refer the question to the Bureau, which would then present its findings and suggestions to the Council.

37. Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) said that, under the Governing Council's rules of procedure, his delegation was justified in raising the question of the venue of the Council's regular sessions. There was no doubt that the issue was important, since it involved a savings of $200,000.

38. The PRESIDENT reiterated that, rather than prolong the debate, the matter should be referred to the Bureau for consideration.

39. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) said that his delegation supported the President's suggestion, as well as the views expressed by the representative of Japan.

40. Mr. SIEBER (Switzerland) supported the President's suggestion. The point made by the representative of Germany was a very valid one. The issue would have to be discussed in keeping with the rules and regulations of the Governing Council.

41. Mr. BORJA de MOZOTA (France) supported the President's suggestion and the observations made by the representative of Germany. The matter raised by the representative of Japan was not just an accounting exercise, but concerned the functioning of the Programme.

(Mr. Borja de Mozota, France)

42. His delegation believed that a three-week session of the Governing Council was sufficient. It was essential, however, to organize the work of the Standing Committee for Programme Matters in a way that would facilitate the Council's work. With respect to the high-level debate, his delegation proposed that human development, the least developed countries, and the role of UNDP within the United Nations system should be the topics given priority. Reports submitted to the Council should avoid duplication and useless repetition. Translations of documents, in particular documents that were at the core of the Council's agenda, should be made available well in advance.

43. Ms. LONGINOTTI (Italy) said that her delegation was in favour of three-week sessions of the Council. Flexibility should be exercised in the biennialization or triennialization of agenda items. In that regard, Italy supported the proposal made by the United States that a table should be provided similar to that contained in document DP/1991/58. The table should be discussed at the Council's organizational meeting. The topic of the high-level debate for 1992 should be human development. Italy supported Sweden's proposal that, on the basis of the study made by the Nordic countries, the role of UNDP in the operational activities of the United Nations system should also be discussed.

44. Mr. ABU-KOASH (Observer for Palestine) said that, owing to the occupation conditions in Palestine and the Secretary-General's decision to send a mission to Palestine, the item on assistance to the Palestinian people should, as a temporary procedure, be included in the Governing Council's agenda on an annual basis.

45. Mr. MISSARY (Observer for Yemen) supported the statement made by the representative of Palestine. His delegation wished to emphasize that the question should be discussed in the context of the mission to be sent to the Gulf region later in the year. It was important to draft a plan of assistance to the peoples of that region and the least developed countries.

46. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Council) said that the biennialization or triennialization of an item did not mean that an item was of lesser importance and should not have documentation, or that the Governing Council should not express its views on the item. The essence of the exercise was to place greater emphasis on certain items. The reason for taking up certain items in a specific year was to ensure a more in-depth study of those issues. The question of biennialization and triennialization would be dealt with by the Drafting Group.

47. Mr. ALMABROUK (Observer for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that, since the item on assistance to the Palestinian people had been included in the agenda of the thirty-eighth session of the Governing Council on an exceptional basis, he wished to know why the item had not been included in the agenda for the Council's thirty-ninth session.

48. Mr. OMOTOSO (Deputy Secretary of the Council) said that, at the organizational meeting in February, it had been decided that the item on assistance to the Palestinian people should be considered at the Council's thirty-eighth session without prejudice to the fact that the item had been biennialized.

49. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Governing Council agreed that the Drafting Group should begin elaborating draft decisions on matters relating to the work of the Council in 1992.

50. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS (DP/1990/74; DP/1991/54, 55, 67, 69 and 70)

51. Mr. EDGREN (Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation), introducing the agenda item, drew attention to document DP/1991/69 concerning United Nations system regular and extrabudgetary technical cooperation expenditures in 1990 financed from sources other than UNDP.

52. During the period under review, the agencies, including UNFPA, had funded technical cooperation activities in developing countries in the amount of $1.1 billion. That was the highest level of non-UNDP-financed technical cooperation expenditure ever recorded, and the growth rate of such expenditure - 14 per cent - had also been the highest since 1980. Thus, even when allowance was made for inflation, non-UNDP-financed technical cooperation expenditure had experienced real growth during 1990.

53. Funding from the other agencies and UNFPA had increased during the year under review. The agencies had disbursed $920 million, as compared to just under $800 million in the previous year - a 15 per cent increase. That growth was due to a significantly higher level of extrabudgetary expenditure, which had risen from $552 million in the previous year to $686 million during 1990 - a jump of 24 per cent. Such a high growth rate had been more than enough to counterbalance the effect of a 5 per cent drop in the flow of expenditure from the agencies' regular budgets: $234 million in 1990 as compared to $246 million in the previous year. With regard to UNFPA, the other source of non-UNDP-financed technical cooperation expenditures, the volume of expenditure, which had stood at $157 million in 1989, had reached $169 million in 1990.

54. As in previous years, agency expenditure had been dominated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). However, recent data had shown that such dominance was much more pronounced with regard to the regular budget than to extrabudgetary expenditure. That implied that many more agencies were relying on extrabudgetary sources to fund their technical cooperation activities.

(Mr. Edgren)

55. For UNFPA, expenditure in 1990 had stood at $169 million as compared to $157 million in the previous year. The skewed distribution by the agencies also spilled over to sectors, with health, agricultural and population activities predominating.

56. The total contributions received by the agencies during 1990 had amounted to $926 million, representing an increase of 10.6 per cent as compared to the previous year. The nominal growth of contributions had been a promiment feature since 1986. About two thirds of all contributions were provided by bilateral sources, while the rest came from multilateral sources. Contributions from the latter had reached $319 million during 1990, while contributions from bilateral sources had amounted to $607 million.

57. During 1990, UNDP had expended $1.1 billion in its effort to foster self-reliance in the developing countries. A slightly smaller volume of resources for technical cooperation activities had flowed from the World Bank/International Development Association (IDA). In short, a total of approximately $3.3 billion in technical cooperation assistance had been channelled to the developing world from the United Nations system, as compared to $3 billion in the previous year.

58. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had incurred expenditure totalling $584 million during 1990, 17 per cent more than in the previous year. A characteristic feature of expenditure by UNICEF since 1985 was an annual growth rate above 10 per cent. The non-technical cooperation expenditure of the World Food Programme (WFP) had amounted to $956 million, representing an increase of 25 per cent as compared to the previous year.

59. In sum, the total operational expenditure of the United Nations system during 1990 had amounted to $4.8 billion, as compared to $4.3 billion in the previous year. That 12 per cent increase was sufficient to permit real growth after inflation had been taken into account.

60. Mr. KRYZHANIVSKIY (Observer for the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant had been a tragedy for the Ukrainian people, and had had negative effects on the country's political, economic, social, moral and psychological situation. More than 1,600 Ukrainian towns and villages, with a total population of over 15 million, were situated in contaminated areas. Over 1.8 million people, including 380,000 children, lived in areas with high radiation levels. Recent studies had revealed traces of radioactive contamination in regions that had previously been considered radiation-free. The incidence of cancer, in particular thyroid cancer and leukaemia in children, had risen considerably over the past two years.

61. The Ukrainian SSR was undertaking emergency measures to mitigate the effects of the accident. A moratorium had been declared on the construction of new nuclear reactors, and a decision had been taken on the gradual

(Mr. Kryzhanivskiy, Observer, Ukrainian SSR)

shut-down of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. The Ukraine had been declared an environmental disaster zone.

62. The accident had severely damaged the Republic's economy. During the past two years, direct expenditure to eliminate the consequences of the accident had exceeded 8 billion roubles. The loss of the use of productive land had been estimated at 22 billion roubles. Moreover, the Republic's programme to provide assistance to victims of the accident required another 5.2 billion roubles.

63. While making every effort to protect its population from the consequences of the accident, his Government recognized that it required the assistance of the international community to deal with the disaster. General Assembly resolution 45/190 requested the organs, specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system to consider possible technical and other special assistance for the areas most affected, particularly in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. His delegation welcomed the fact that a number of United Nations agencies, in particular the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), WHO and UNICEF, had already responded to that request. He hoped that UNDP, which possessed considerable material and technical resources, would participate actively in international efforts to mitigate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. To that end, the delegations of the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Soviet Union had prepared and submitted a draft decision on the subject to the Governing Council for consideration. The draft dealt with the Programme's response to the request contained in Assembly resolution 45/190.

64. Mr. ESPADA-PLATET (United States of America) said that his delegation appreciated the 10-year perspective provided in document DP/1990/74. He had noted that the funding for operational activities provided by United Nations agencies other than UNDP had more than doubled, so that it was close to, if not greater than, the UNDP funding. Technical assistance funding from regular budgets had grown by 600 per cent, and extrabudgetary funding from agencies other than WFP and UNICEF had doubled.

65. Those figures underscored the importance of improved field-level coordination, in view of the growing volume of resources which did not flow through UNDP. The United States strongly supported UNDP in its role as the central funding and coordinating body of the United Nations system. His delegation drew attention to the consequences of providing large amounts of extrabudgetary funding to United Nations specialized and technical agencies, including the increased fragmentation of system activities in the field, and a decreased willingness on the part of the agencies to work closely with UNDP.

66. The United States believed that there should be a division of labour among the United Nations agencies on the basis of their comparative advantages. The international strategy on illicit drugs was an example of such an arrangement, and it might be appropriate in other areas as well.

67. Mr. OKSAMITNIY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to the draft decision submitted by the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Soviet Union concerning UNDP participation in activities to mitigate the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, said that he was grateful to those delegations which had expressed a willingness to sponsor the draft decision, and hoped that other delegations would join them.

68. Document DP/1991/54, section IV, contained a reference to General Assembly resolution 45/190 concerning international cooperation to address and mitigate the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Although the introductory paragraph of that section suggested that the resolution was of importance only in guiding the general activities of UNDP, without giving rise to specific measures, the sponsors of the draft decision had taken the initiative of preparing a text which would also provide for UNDP action in response to Chernobyl. It should be noted that a number of international organizations, including the Economic Commission for Europe, WHO, UNICEF and others, had adopted decisions pertaining to their participation in such activities, and it would be appropriate for UNDP to do likewise. Furthermore, the draft decision was fully in keeping with General Assembly resolution 45/190 and did not go beyond the consensus achieved at the forty-fifth session. The adoption of the draft decision would not involve any additional pressure on the UNDP budget, nor would it mean that resources would be diverted from developing countries. The Chernobyl accident had coincided with a difficult economic situation in his country; it was to be hoped that those difficulties would be surmounted in due course so that the Soviet Union would be able to respond generously to the needs of the third world.

69. Mr. MISSARY (Observer for Yemen), referring to document DP/1991/54, said that his delegation was generally satisfied with the efforts made by UNDP to implement the General Assembly resolutions; however, in connection with the reference in section III to General Assembly resolution 45/222 concerning assistance for the reconstruction and development of Yemen, he would have appreciated information on the steps taken or planned by UNDP, especially as the question would be discussed by the Economic and Social Council at its forthcoming session. His delegation had also hoped that the document would refer to the efforts made and the difficulties encountered by UNDP in mobilizing resources to provide assistance to his country.

70. The General Assembly had also adopted resolution 45/193, concerning the unification of Yemen. His delegation would have appreciated a reference in document DP/1991/54 to that resolution, as Yemen attached great importance to the role of UNDP in providing support for its economic and social infrastructure.

71. Mr. EDGREN (Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation) said that he was grateful to the United States representative for expressing support for the UNDP role as coordinator at the field level.

(Mr. Edgren)

72. Drawing attention to document DP/1991/69, he said chart 1 showed that the role of UNDP as the central funding mechanism of the United Nations system had become far less evident. Accordingly, UNDP would have to make use of its comparative advantage in coordination. It was to be hoped that specific ideas on that subject would be forthcoming at the next session of the Governing Council.

73. Mr. OMOTOSO (Deputy Secretary of the Council) said he wished to assure the representative of Yemen that all resolutions and decisions concerning that country which had been adopted by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly were being fully implemented by UNDP; indeed, UNDP representatives had taken an active part in the discussions of those texts. If a reference to General Assembly resolution 45/193 had been omitted from document DP/1991/54, that did not imply that UNDP was not part of the implementation process. UNDP had been told that the unification should not lead to a reduction in the indicative planning figures of the two Yemens. He urged the representative of Yemen to take up any specific questions with the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative for Yemen, who was attending the current meeting.

74. Mr. MISSARY (Observer for Yemen) said that he was grateful to the secretariat for that clarification and for reaffirming the role of UNDP in providing support to his country. Ideally, document DP/1991/54 should have included a reference to General Assembly resolution 45/193 and to the efforts made in the context of the unification. As he understood it, under the resolution the indicative planning figure for the unified country should be not only equal to, but greater than the indicative planning figures for the two former Yemens, in view of the fact that the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen had both been on the list of least developed countries. His delegation therefore proposed that the Council should adopt a decision affirming such an understanding of General Assembly resolution 45/193.

75. Mrs. DUDIK-GAYOSO (United States of America) said that document DP/1991/54 represented an improvement over previous documents of that type in that it identified the matters which were of particular importance to UNDP and to the Council. She suggested that, in the future, the Administrator might want to highlight particularly relevant General Assembly resolutions in his annual report.

76. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to take note of the documents listed under the agenda item.

77. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.